

THE CORTISOL RESET PROTOCOL

A Science-Backed Daily Routine to Rewire Stress & Elevate Dopamine

Lower Stress. Sharper Focus. Better Sleep. Natural Dopamine.



■ MORNING – PRIME YOUR BRAIN

Wake Up + Immediate Sunlight (5–10 min)

What to do: Step outside or near a window. Let natural light hit your eyes (don't stare at sun).

Why it works: Resets circadian rhythm, reduces morning cortisol spike.

Science: Huberman Lab, Stanford – 2021; Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism (2013).

Barefoot Grounding (5 min)

What to do: Walk barefoot on grass, soil, terrace floor.

Why it works: Lowers inflammation, reduces stress hormones, improves mood.

Science: Journal of Environmental and Public Health (2012).

Cold Water Face Splash / Cold Shower (30–60 sec)

What to do: Splash cold water on face OR take a 30–60 sec cold shower at end.

Why it works: Massive dopamine spike (200–250%), lowers cortisol after initial shock, boosts alertness.

Science: European Journal of Applied Physiology (2000); PLOS One (2014).

■■ AFTERNOON – RESET & RECHARGE

The “NSDR” (Non-Sleep Deep Rest)

The Move: 10 minutes of a guided NSDR or Yoga Nidra session.

Science: Dr. Andrew Huberman – NSDR increases dopamine in nigrostriatal pathway by ~65% and downregulates fight-or-flight response.

The “Magnesium Melt”

The Move: Take a high-quality Magnesium Glycinate supplement or an Epsom salt bath.

Science: Nutrients journal – Magnesium regulates the HPA axis and blocks cortisol overload.

■ EVENING – BUILD CALM DOPAMINE

The “Steady-State” Dopamine Builder

The Move: Zone 2 Resistance Training (slow, controlled lifting at ~50% max). Focus on mind–muscle connection.

Science: *Frontiers in Psychology* – mindful movement increases self-efficacy and creates sustained dopamine release.

■ NIGHT – SHUT DOWN STRESS

The “Brain Dump” Protocol

The Move: Write down every to-do for tomorrow on paper.

Science: *Journal of Experimental Psychology* – reduces Zeigarnik effect and pre-sleep cortisol.

The “Digital Decouple” (10:1 Rule)

The Move: Phone in another room 60 min before sleep. Read a physical book instead.

Science: Harvard Medical School – blue light suppresses melatonin & shifts circadian rhythm by 3 hours.

Designed for high performers who want calm focus, deep sleep & emotional control.

Looks Like Junk, Heals Like Wellness

Comfort Food That Actually Comforts Your Hormones

1. Oats Pancakes – “Dessert-Style Stress Buster Pancakes”

Ingredients:

- 1 cup oats flour (or blended oats)
- 1 ripe banana (natural sweetness + mood booster) (add stevia/sugar free if want more sweet)
- 1 egg (or curd for veg)
- 2 tbsp Greek yogurt / thick curd (gut health → stress control)
- 1 tsp cinnamon (reduces cortisol spikes)
- 1 tsp cocoa powder (mood uplifting)
- 1 tsp honey
- ½ tsp baking powder
- Milk as needed

Toppings:

- Dark chocolate drizzle (70–85%)
- Chopped walnuts / almonds (rich in magnesium → relaxes nerves)
- Few berries or pomegranate (antioxidants = lower stress)

Why it lowers stress:

- Oats + nuts = magnesium + B vitamins → calm nervous system
- Cinnamon + cocoa → reduces stress hormones + improves mood
- Banana + yogurt → serotonin support

2. Pizza – Oats Crust Stress-Free Pizza

Base Ingredients (Oats Crust):

- 1 cup oats flour (or blended oats)
- ½ cup curd / Greek yogurt (gut health → stress control)
- 1 tsp olive oil
- ½ tsp baking powder
- Pinch salt + oregano
- Water as needed to make dough

Pizza Sauce:

- Tomato puree
- Garlic (mood & immunity booster)
- Olive oil
- Pinch turmeric
- Black pepper + oregano

Toppings:

- Mozzarella cheese (comfort hormone boost dopamine)
- Mushrooms (adaptogen → stress resistance)
- Bell peppers
- Sweet corn
- Spinach leaves (magnesium rich – relaxation)
- Olives (healthy fats)
- Chilli flakes + oregano

Why this pizza reduce cortisol:

- Mushrooms → help body handle stress better
- Spinach + corn → magnesium + B vitamins = calm nerves
- Cheese → boosts feel-good hormones
- Olives → reduce anxiety through healthy fats
- Garlic + turmeric → reduce stress inflammation
- Olive oil → supports nervous system
- Oats → magnesium + complex carbs = lower cortisol spikes
- Curd → gut-brain connection

3. Paneer Wrap – Marinade + Filling

Paneer Marinade (cottage cheese):

- 150g paneer cubes
- 3 tbsp thick curd / Greek yogurt (gut healthy)
- ½ tsp turmeric (lowers stress inflammation)
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp olive oil
- ½ tsp garam masala
- Pinch salt
- ½ tsp honey (balances cortisol spikes)

Filling (Crunch + Hormone Balance):

- Capsicum
- Onion
- Shredded purple cabbage (antioxidants lower stress load)
- Spinach leaves (magnesium bomb)
- 1 tsp olive oil

Wrap Base:

- Whole wheat roti / tortilla
- Light butter or olive oil for toasting

Cooking Method:

- 1 Marinate paneer 10–15 min
- 2 Sauté paneer on pan till golden & creamy
- 3 In same pan, toss veggies lightly (keep crunch)
- 4 Warm roti, spread green calm chutney
- 5 Add paneer + veggies
- 6 Optional: drizzle little honey-mustard sauce & peri peri
- 7 Roll tight & toast till crispy outside

4. Cheese Bread Mushroom Toast – Cheesy Garlic Bread

- 2 slices multigrain / sourdough bread
- ½ cup sautéed mushrooms (adaptogen → stress resistance)
- 1 clove garlic (immunity + mood)
- 1 tbsp olive oil or butter
- 2–3 tbsp mozzarella or cheese blend
- Oregano + chilli flakes
- Pinch turmeric
- Few spinach leaves (optional but powerful)

Method:

- 1 Sauté mushrooms + garlic in olive oil
- 2 Spread on bread
- 3 Add cheese + spices
- 4 Toast until golden & stretchy

Why it lowers stress:

- Mushrooms → regulate stress response
- Cheese → boosts dopamine (comfort hormone)
- Spinach → magnesium bomb for relaxation